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Friday, 1 December 2006, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Ms. Al-Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 14 (*continued*)

Question of Palestine

Report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (A/61/35)

Report of the Secretary-General (A/61/355)

Draft resolutions (A/61/L.31, A/61/L.32, A/61/L.33 and A/61/L.34)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Members will recall that the General Assembly held a debate on this item at its 60th and 61st plenary meetings, on 29 and 30 November 2006.

I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal to make an oral revision to draft resolution A/61/L.34.

Mr. Badji (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I would like to inform the General Assembly of some revisions that have been made to draft resolution A/61/L.34, which is now before the Assembly. The revisions have not yet been translated. I will therefore read them out in English.

(*spoke in English*)

The following are the revisions that have been made to the text. As members will note, there are some minor changes, but for the sake of clarity I present the following, which constitute the bulk of the changes.

The sixteenth preambular paragraph has been split into two, although the meaning has been retained. The sixteenth preambular paragraph should read as follows:

> "Expressing deep concern about the Israeli policy of closure and the severe restrictions, including curfews and the permit regime, that continue to be imposed on the movement of persons and goods, including medical and humanitarian personnel and goods, throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and the consequent negative impact on the socio-economic situation of the Palestinian people, which remains that of a dire humanitarian crisis".

The new seventeenth preambular paragraph reads as follows:

> "Concerned about the continued establishment of Israeli checkpoints in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and the transformation of several of these checkpoints into structures akin to permanent border crossings inside the occupied Palestinian territory, which are severely impairing the territorial contiguity of the territory and severely undermining efforts to rehabilitate and develop the Palestinian economy".

The previous twentieth preambular paragraph has been replaced with the following, twenty-first, paragraph:

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"Welcoming the efforts of the Arab foreign ministers demonstrated in the meeting held in the Security Council on 21 September 2006, who called for, among other things, a solution to the conflict on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, especially from the United Nations Security Council, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Road Map".

The previous twenty-second preambular paragraph, now the twenty-third, has been revised to read as follows:

"Welcoming the Stockholm Donors' Conference on the Humanitarian Situation in the Palestinian Territories of 1 September 2006 and encouraging further donor meetings, as well as the establishment of international mechanisms, and the regard acknowledging the temporary international mechanism to provide assistance to the Palestinian people and to alleviate the financial crisis and the dire socio-economic and humanitarian situation being faced by the Palestinian people".

The former twenty-sixth preambular paragraph has been replaced by the following paragraph, the twenty-seventh:

"Welcoming the Palestinian truce initiative, and its acceptance by Israel that came into effect on 26 November 2006 and urging both sides to maintain this truce, which could pave the way for genuine negotiations towards a just resolution to the conflict and extend it to the West Bank".

Operative paragraph 4 has been deleted. Paragraph 5, now paragraph 4, should read as follows:

"Calls upon the parties themselves, with the support of the Quartet and other interested parties, to exert all efforts necessary to halt the deterioration of the situation, to reverse all measures taken on the ground since 28 September 2000, and to immediately resume direct peace negotiations towards the conclusion of a final peaceful settlement on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions, especially from the Security Council, the Arab Peace Initiative, the terms of reference of the Madrid Conference and the Road Map".

(spoke in French)

Those are the revisions that have been made to draft resolution A/61/L.34. I thank delegations for their patience — especially those that are non-English-speaking — as regards those last-minute changes.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/61/L.31, A/61/L.32, A/61/L.33, and A/61/L.34 as orally revised.

We shall first consider draft resolution A/61/L.31, which is entitled "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People". I should like to announce that, since the issuance of document A/61/L.31, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/61/L.31 was adopted by 101 votes to 7, with 62 abstentions (resolution 61/22).

[Subsequently the delegations of Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Lesotho advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour, and the delegation of Nauru advised that it had intended to vote against.]

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We turn next to draft resolution A/61/L.32, entitled "Division for Palestinian Rights of the Secretariat". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cameroon, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/61/L.32 was adopted by 101 votes to 7, with 62 abstentions (resolution 61/23).

[Subsequently the delegations of Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Lesotho advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour, and the delegation of Nauru advised that it had intended to vote against.]

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We turn next to draft resolution A/61/L.33, entitled "Special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Australia, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Canada, Fiji, Malawi, Moldova, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/61/L.33 was adopted by 157 votes to 7, with 9 abstentions (resolution 61/24).

[Subsequently the delegations of Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Lesotho advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We turn next to draft resolution A/61/L.34, as orally revised, entitled "Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine". A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey,

Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Australia, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, Malawi, Moldova, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/61/L.34 as orally revised was adopted by 157 votes to 7, with 10 abstentions (resolution 61/25).

[Subsequently the delegations of Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Lesotho advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the observer of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): I just want to thank all those who voted in favour of these resolutions, as well as to say that this is another indication of the massive support of the international community for a just and peaceful solution on the basis of two States and for moving the peace process forward. We hope that one Member State will take note of these votes and listen to the overwhelming decision of the international community.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 14.

Agenda item 13 (*continued*)

The situation in the Middle East

Reports of the Secretary-General (A/61/298 and A/61/355)

Draft resolutions (A/61/L.35 and A/61/L.36)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Members will recall that the General Assembly held a debate on this item at its 61st and 62nd plenary meetings, on 30 November 2006.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/61/L.35 and A/61/L.36.

We will first take up draft resolution A/61/L.35, entitled "Jerusalem". I should like to inform members that, since the issuance of document A/61/L.35, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey,

Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Australia, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Fiji, Malawi, Moldova, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Uganda, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/61/L.35 was adopted by 157 votes to 6, with 10 abstentions (resolution 61/26).

[Subsequently the delegations of Gambia and Guinea-Bissau advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We turn next to draft resolution A/61/L.36, entitled "The Syrian Golan".

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Canada, Israel, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Vanuatu

Draft resolution A/61/L.36 was adopted by 107 votes to 6, with 60 abstentions (resolution 61/27).

[Subsequently the delegations of Gambia and Guinea-Bissau advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote on the resolutions just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to explain the votes of the delegations of Brazil and Argentina in connection with resolution 61/27, entitled "The Syrian Golan", which the General Assembly has just adopted.

Brazil and Argentina voted in favour of the resolution because we believe that the illegality of the seizure of territory by force is at the heart of the resolution. Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter of the United Nations prohibits the use or threat of use of

force against the territorial integrity of States. That is a peremptory norm of international law.

We would also like to clarify the position of our delegations with regard to paragraph 6 of the resolution. Our votes were not intended to prejudge the matters referred to in that paragraph, in particular its reference to the line of 4 June 1967.

On behalf of the Governments of Argentina and Brazil, I would like to take this opportunity to urge the authorities of Israel and Syria to resume negotiations with a view to finding a lasting solution to the question of the Syrian Golan in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the principle of land for peace.

Mrs. Schroderus-Fox (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, Liechtenstein and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

I would like to explain our votes on draft resolution A/61/L.36, on the Syrian Golan. The European Union remains concerned about the situation in the Middle East. It welcomes the agreement between President Mahmoud Abbas and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to establish a mutual ceasefire in Gaza, and calls on the parties to do more to facilitate the urgent reinvigoration of the peace process. There can be no military solution to the Middle East conflict.

A just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the situation in the Middle East, including on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, must be based on Security Council resolution 242 (1967) — which emphasizes the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every State in the region can live in security — and on subsequent resolutions 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003). Such a settlement must also be based on the Madrid Terms of Reference, in particular the principle of land for peace, as well as on the implementation of the road map and all existing agreements between the parties. We reiterate our intention to continue to work relentlessly with the regional parties as part of the Middle East Quartet towards that goal.

The European Union would like to reiterate that a final peace settlement will not be complete without taking account of the Israel-Syria and Israel-Lebanon aspects. Negotiations should resume as soon as possible with the aim of reaching an agreement.

It should be recalled that, earlier this week in the Fourth Committee, the European Union voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.4/61/L.17, on the occupied Syrian Golan, which called upon Israel to desist from changing the demographic composition of the occupied Syrian Golan and, in particular, to desist from the establishment of settlements. We believe that the resolution on the Syrian Golan under today's agenda item contains references that could undermine the process of bilateral negotiations. For that reason, as in previous years, the European Union has abstained in the voting on the resolution.

Finally, in the spirit of rationalizing the work of the General Assembly agenda, the European Union would prefer to have only one resolution dealing with this issue before this body.

Mr. Mottaghi-Nejad (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation voted in favour of the resolutions just adopted under agenda items 13 and 14, on the situation in the Middle East and the question of Palestine, respectively. The views of the Islamic Republic of Iran on those important issues were articulated during the general debate and the debate on the question of Palestine in the Assembly. In short, we believe that a durable peace in Palestine will be possible through justice, an end to discrimination, an end to the occupation of all Palestinian territories, the return of all Palestinian refugees, the resort to democratic means to determine the wishes of the people and the establishment of a democratic Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

Mr. Siegel (United States of America): The United States cannot support resolution 61/27, on the Syrian Golan. We continue to disagree with the text, with prejudges final status issues that must be negotiated between the parties. In recent days, we abstained in the voting on the Fourth Committee draft resolution entitled "The occupied Syrian Golan" (A/C.4/61/L.17). Recently, we acted with reason and restraint in not blocking consensus on a Syrian candidate for the Committee on Conferences. Today we voted no.

Our decisions on these matters, as with all issues that come before the United Nations, are rooted in our regard for the United Nations and the importance of

dealing with individual issues in a responsible manner. Unfortunately, not all Member States share that view. As we voted today, the United Nations must take this occasion to register its profound unhappiness over Syria's continued disregard for United Nations and relevant Security Council resolutions. Syria is using the General Assembly to direct accusations at Israel even as it flouts a number of Security Council resolutions — including resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006) — with its refusal in practice to treat Lebanon as a genuinely sovereign country.

We would like to reiterate our alarm at indications that Syria is working with Hezbollah and other Lebanese allies to destabilize the democratically elected Government of Lebanon. Syria's political and material support for Hezbollah's continued existence as a militia was made clear during last summer's hostilities in Lebanon, despite the call by Security Council resolution 1559 (2004) for the disarmament of all militias in Lebanon. We reiterate our concern that Syria is not abiding by the embargo of the unauthorized weapons shipments into Lebanon imposed by Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

The Security Council has also adopted a series of resolutions under which Iraq's neighbours are called upon to take steps to prevent the destabilization of Iraq. Yet Syria continues to allow its territory to be used by networks that terrorize Iraq.

Syria also continues to host organizations that reject peace efforts and conduct terrorist attacks against Israel.

We call upon the Syrian regime to reverse its destructive and destabilizing policies, namely, to halt its support for terrorism, to end its efforts to destabilize Lebanon, to prevent the use of its territory to support the insurgency in Iraq and to cease the harassment of Syrians who seek to defend their rights and to bring democratic change to their country. We remain focused on the need to change and to counter the policies of the Syrian regime. The Syrian people and people across the region deserve better.

The President *(spoke in Arabic)*: I call on the representative of Syria on a point of order.

Mr. Al-Jafari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): If we understand correctly, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we are entitled to take the floor immediately upon raising a point of order. My delegation therefore regrets that it was not given the floor when we initially raised the point of order.

The representative of the United States has strayed from the topic under discussion to distract the world's attention from the important issues we are discussing, namely, the agenda items on Palestine and on the situation in the Middle East.

The representative of the United States referred, among other things, to Syria's alleged lack of respect for the United Nations. In that context, it is important to say — and we could say many things — that the United States has not always respected the United Nations since its inception. It is important to bear that in mind, especially as the representative of the United States has said so himself, that the United States has stood in the way of international legitimacy 84 times since the early days of the Organization. The United States has used its right of veto 84 times to prevent justice from being done throughout the world in the settling of disputes, thereby bringing States into conflict with one another, encouraging wars and coups d'etat and the spilling of blood throughout the world. The memory of the international Organization is not short. The United States has used its veto privilege 44 times to protect Israel, its foster son, and to stop it from adhering to resolutions of international legitimacy. Therefore, how can the United States talk about non-respect by Syria for the United Nations, when we are one of the founding States of the Organization? We achieved our independence through the United Nations. Our diplomacy is based on resolutions adopted by the United Nations. Our appeals for a just and comprehensive peace are based on United Nations resolutions.

The representative of the United States crossed a red line by referring to my country's domestic affairs and even suggesting that Syria has a tendency to interfere in the internal affairs of other States. As to his allegations concerning Lebanon, I would point out to him that many Arabs, Lebanese and people throughout the world reproach the United States for its ongoing flagrant interference in Lebanon's affairs through its ambassador and embassy in Beirut. I would remind my American colleague that Syria has implemented the relevant provisions of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) even as Lebanon's airspace and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon are violated by Israel by sea and air. That information has been

officially recorded by the Lebanese and distributed to Member States from time to time.

Such American provocations are shabby and in keeping with its cheap political tactics. The total ignorance embodied in the United States statement is a reflection of the United States' policy in the Middle East. That failed policy, which has unleashed further disasters — bloodshed, invasions, occupation and instability in the region — has also had disastrous consequences throughout the world, to which all of us, even those who work for the United States Administration, can bear witness.

I have some advice for the representative of the United States. I ask him to read the first-rate report issued by the group led by Mr. Baker and Mr. Hamilton on the serious policy errors committed by the United States Administration in the Middle East. I advise him and his colleagues to closely read the comment recently made by the international media, the diplomatic corps and the Secretary-General on the calamitous results throughout the world of the United States belligerent, aggressive policies of occupation — policies based on invasions, the use of force and arbitrary actions, rather than on the influence that could be wielded by a large country like the United States to achieve stability in the world and the peaceful settlement of conflict through dialogue and interaction instead of invasions or threats of invasion and occupation.

This morning, the representative of the United States made a statement that is difficult to understand following the adoption by the Assembly of the resolution on the Syrian Golan, which clearly demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of States oppose Israel's occupation of the Golan. Although the resolution was adopted, the representative of the United States still sought to teach us about the need to respect this international Organization. Instead, he should have apologized for not voting in favour of the resolution.

I am extremely surprised that the representative of the United States should insist on damaging his own country, and I am sure that many other delegations have also been taken aback and cannot understand why the United States should defend a failed regional policy that is arbitrary and misguided. An Arab proverb says that it is better for you to hide if you have inflicted disaster. In that context, the representative of the United States might do better to consider that proverb so as to improve his performance at the United Nations.

I call upon the United States once again not to involve itself in the internal affairs of States, to respect the United Nations Charter, to stop using the veto, to cease undermining resolutions that enjoy international legitimacy, and to withdraw its support for the Israeli occupation of our territories. Our demand for the liberation of our occupied territory is entirely just, whether or not it suits the representative of the United States. The United States has been and should always be a sponsor of peace, not a sponsor of terrorism, and of invasion of peoples and countries.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Observer of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): I have thanked those who voted in favour of the resolutions related to the question of Palestine. I also want to thank those who voted in favour of the resolutions as a whole.

With reference to the resolutions concerning Jerusalem, I just want to place on record our appreciation and thanks to Costa Rica and El Salvador for doing what they did, as reflected in the text of the resolution and in their voting. We appreciate that very much, and we see it as a step in the right direction.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to express its deep appreciation and gratitude to the General Assembly for adopting by overwhelming majority of a resolution on the Syrian Golan, as it has repeatedly done since 1981, as well as of the other resolutions on the question of Palestine.

The positive response of the international community, which continues to support those resolutions, reflects the Member States' dedication to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and their support for our right to recover our territories occupied by Israel, with United States backing, for more than 39 years.

The adoption of the resolutions also sends a clear international message to Israel that occupation, killing, aggressive expansionist policies, and faits accomplis will be categorically condemned by the entire

international community. We are all interested in seeing law and justice prevail, implementing the United Nations Charter in the maintenance of international peace and security, and rejecting foreign occupation in any form, aggression, expansionism and settlement-building on the lands of others.

I should like to repeat Syria's thanks to all the sponsors of the resolution on the Syrian Golan and to all those that voted in favour of it. I reiterate my country's appeal for a just and comprehensive peace and its insistence now more than ever on the liberation of the Golan from Israeli occupation through all means consistent with international law. We call on the international community to support us in achieving that goal. War can be prevented by pressuring Israel, the party that is blocking peace, to accept a peace that will ensure a bright future for the region.

The Israeli occupation of the Golan is a double crime under international law. That crime involves not just the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan, but also Israel's illegal annexation of that territory in 1981. In that year, the Security Council adopted resolution 497 (1981), in which it stated that the occupation is null and void and has no legal merit. Despite that, we continue to hear statements from some parties indicating their desire to prejudge the outcome of negotiations between Syria and Israel, as though such negotiations were actually taking place.

Our people are experiencing the bitter reality of life under the yoke of the Israeli occupation in the Golan. In accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, the international community should categorically condemn the occupation and annexation, just as, in 1939, it denounced the Nazi annexation of the Danzig Corridor and the Czech Sudetenland. The Nazis' illegitimate actions towards two independent countries of Europe led to condemnation by the international community of the Nazi regime.

In our view and the view of many, the Golan is no less important than the Sudetenland or the Danzig Corridor. That is why we call Israeli policies Nazi policies.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the representative of Lebanon.

Ms. Ziade (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I speak in the conviction of the right of peoples to recover their occupied territories and to enjoy their full national sovereignty. The Government of Lebanon has therefore always been fully committed to all the relevant resolutions on that issue.

We believe that the settlement of the Israeli-Arab and the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts will be brought about through the commitment of all countries to respect the relevant international resolutions. Peace in the Middle East is absolutely necessary and is a goal that the Group of Arab States has always striven to achieve on the basis of the principles of the Madrid Conference or of the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Arab countries at the 2002 Beirut summit.

We thank all those countries that have supported and continue to support Lebanon in its efforts to overcome the problems caused by the Israeli aggression and to recover and extend our sovereignty and authority throughout our territory. We call on all countries to commit themselves fully to implementing all resolutions of international legitimacy in order to ensure that Lebanon remains a crossroads of civilizations and a country that embodies the message that the Middle East can be a region of progress, prosperity and hope for a better future to all its peoples.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 13.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.